

Lincoln County Health Department Newsletter

607 North Sales Street, Merrill, Wisconsin 54452

Phone 715-536-0307

Fax 715-536-2011

Spring 2009



- ▶ **Promoting Health**
- ▶ **Protecting the Environment**
- ▶ **Preventing Disease**

Programs:

- **Childhood and Adult Immunization Program**
- **Disease Control and Follow-up**
- **Environmental Health**
- **Family Health**
- **Foot Care Clinics**
- **Healthy People Lincoln County**
- **Jail Health**
- **Public Health Preparedness**
- **School Health Services**
- **Tobacco Control**
- **Wisconsin Well Women**

For more Information:

Shelley Hersil, CHES
Lincoln Co. Health Officer
715-536-0307
www.co.lincoln.wi.us

UNNATURAL CAUSES OF HEALTH – *does our social class make us sick?*

Americans spend more than twice the amount of money per person on medical care than the average rich country. Yet, most of us will die by the time we are 77 years old. There are 28 countries whose people will, on average, outlive us. This includes Japan, where they spend almost a third less on medical care and the average person lives to 82 years.

Healthy habits, medical discoveries, and of course, health care are all important. But research suggests they miss the most critical reasons of all: where we are born, live and work can make us ill as surely as germs and viruses do. This is known as Unnatural Causes.



It's not just the poor who are sick. Even the middle class die, on average, almost three years earlier than the rich. The wages and benefits we're paid, where we live, the schools we attend, how easy it is for us to get food or healthcare, and even our tax policies are health issues every bit as important as diet, smoking and exercise.

But how does our class and race make us sick? Research has shown that constant or chronic stress is one reason. Jobs that don't pay enough, unpaid bills, or lack of control over work and schedules are examples of chronic stress. Like keeping your foot on the gas pedal, the constant release of stress hormones can wear down the body's organs and systems, causing more people to become ill with diseases and die early.

Lincoln County Health Department will be hosting a community presentation on Unnatural Causes on Wednesday, March 25. The program will be held at the Health Department. For more information, contact Tammi Boers, Public Health Educator, at 715-536-0307.

For more information on Unnatural Causes, visit:
[www.unnaturalcauses.org/about the series.php](http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/about_the_series.php)

FIRST BREATH

Smoking during pregnancy can lead to:

- Miscarriage or stillbirth
- Babies born too early or too small
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Respiratory illness, ear infections and asthma
- Future behavior problems and problems in school

Lincoln County Health Department is now offering the First Breath Program. The program helps pregnant women quit smoking through one-on-one counseling, access to health resources, and other incentives.

Quitting smoking is difficult for everyone, but there are ways to be successful. First Breath offers non-judgmental support during your quit attempt. You don't have to be perfect – you only have to try.

Once enrolled, more than 37% of clients report not smoking during pregnancy and over 32% cut down during pregnancy. Not only does this lower the risk for different cancers, but it ensures a healthier life for Wisconsin women and their babies.

For more information or to find out if you are eligible, contact Sue Kuber, Public Health Nurse, Lincoln County Health Department at 715-539-1369.

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME (SIDS)

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) stands for the sudden, unexplained death of an infant younger than one year of age. The number of babies who die of SIDS has quadrupled in the past 20 years in the United States, most thought to be from parents sleeping with their babies.



What can be done to lower baby's risk of SIDS?

- Babies should not sleep in the same bed as their parent(s) or sibling(s).
- Never place a baby to sleep on an adult bed. Babies can suffocate in bedding or become trapped between the mattress and bed frame or mattress and wall.
- Consider a portable play pen, such as a "Pack N Play", if a crib is not an option. Be sure to only use the mattress or pad provided by the manufacturer.
- Always place your baby on their back to sleep, for naps and at night.
- Use a firm crib mattress covered by a fitted crib sheet.
- Keep soft objects, toys and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area. Do not use pillows, quilts or pillow-like crib bumpers and keep all items away from your baby's face.
- Do not let your baby overheat during sleep. Dress your baby in light sleep clothing.
- Do not allow smoking around your baby.
- Provide "tummy time" when your baby is awake and someone is watching.

For more information, contact Sue Kuber, Public Health Nurse, Lincoln County Health Department at 715-539-1369.

WISCONSIN WELL WOMEN PROGRAM



Lincoln County Health Department is now offering the Wisconsin Well Woman Program (WWWP). Well Woman is a cancer screening program that pays for health check-ups in order to prevent and detect breast and cervical cancer.

The check-ups may include a breast exam, mammogram, pelvic exam and a Pap test. The program may also pay for some follow-up tests to diagnose cancer. Also, you may be eligible for help to pay your medical bills if you need treatment.

In order to qualify for the Well Women Program, the following needs to be met:

- are between the ages of 45-64 (some exceptions for women age 35-44),
- have no or limited health insurance,
- are a Wisconsin resident and
- meet income guidelines.

For more information or to find out if you qualify, contact Judy Sargent, WWWP Coordinator, Lincoln County Health Department at 715-539-1388.

PARENTS THAT HOST THE MOST – LOSE THE MOST

Many well-meaning parents, aware of the dangers of drinking and driving among teens, think it is enough to take away car keys so that their teen and their teen's friends can "party safely". What these parents may or may not know is that they are breaking the Wisconsin Underage Drinking Law that makes it illegal to serve alcohol to their teen's friends or allow them to drink alcohol, even if it is in their own homes.

Parents are the best protectors that young people have against underage drinking. In order to protect their children's health, safety and future, a clear message has to be set that there is no safe way at their age to drink alcohol. "Parents That Host the Most – Lose the Most" is a program that provides parents with good information about the health risks of underage drinking and the legal consequences of providing alcohol to youth.



In 2008, Lincoln County Drug Free Community Coalition joined with other federal, state and local highway safety and law enforcement officials across the nation to remind all parents and community members – *Parents Who Host Lose the Most*. The program continues in 2009 throughout Lincoln County.

Talk to your kids and teens you know and make sure they know you are concerned for their safety and do not condone underage alcohol or drug use or their use of a motor vehicle after any use of alcohol or drugs.

For more information, contact Christine Brown, Community Health Planner, Lincoln County Health Department, 715-539-1372.

PROTECTING COMMUNITY HEALTH: COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Lincoln County Health Department is required by law, Wisconsin Statutes 441 and 448, to monitor over 80 communicable diseases in Lincoln County. Hospitals, doctors and laboratories are required by law to report the diseases to the local health departments.

A staff from the Health Department will contact the person who is ill after they receive the report from the healthcare provider. The designated staff will provide education on the disease as well as ways to prevent the disease. This may also include contacting any person that may have come into contact with the ill person, such as with diseases like hepatitis or sexually transmitted diseases. This process is confidential.

The goal of the communicable disease program is to find out where the disease may have started and to prevent it from spreading by assuring the ill person gets the right medical treatment. Other program goals include vaccinating for diseases that are preventable with immunizations and providing education to the community.

Over the last five years, Lyme Disease and Chlamydia have been the two diseases that have affected the highest number of people in Lincoln County.

Lyme Disease is spread by the deer tick and can be prevented by avoiding areas with ticks, using insect repellent with DEET, wearing long pants and sleeves and checking for ticks when you come indoors. Common signs are a "bulls-eye" rash, fever, headache, tiredness and muscle and joint pain. For more information on Lyme disease, visit: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/FactSheets/LymeDisease.htm>.

Chlamydia is a sexually spread disease and most people with the disease do not have symptoms. Chlamydia can be prevented by only having sexual contact with one person, knowing your partner's past, using appropriate protection and getting tested. For more information on Chlamydia, visit: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/factsheets/Chlamydia.htm>

**Leading Reportable Diseases
Lincoln County 2008**

Disease	Number	Past 5 Years (2004-2008)
Lyme Disease	73	254
Chlamydia	63	224
Hepatitis C	9	10
Genital Herpes	8	51
Hepatitis A	8	32
Campylobacter	8	29
Blastomycosis	7	67

In 2008, Lincoln County also had their first person ill with malaria in many years.

If you have questions on other communicable diseases, contact the Lincoln County Health Department at 715-536-0307.

Subscription Information

The Lincoln County Health Department Newsletter is published bi-annually. Send address changes to:
Lincoln County Health Department, 607 North Sales Street, Merrill, WI 54452 (715) 536-0307